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Executive Director

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## **Statement Opposing Fracked Gas Pipelines**

Adopted by the NC Council of Churches Governing Board on September 12, 2017

As people of faith, we proclaim our belief that our world is God's creation, that God sees it as good, and that it is ours to protect and maintain. As Governing Board members of the NC Council of Churches we represent nearly a million and a half North Carolinians, from many faith traditions, who share a common teaching: we are charged by our Creator with caring for creation (Genesis 1:28, 2:15), and are called to be faithful stewards of that which is entrusted to us (Luke 16:1-13).

Our religious convictions require us to protect the climate, safety, quality of life, environmental justice, rural heritage, water quality, biodiversity, use of public lands, and sustainable local economies. Pipelines constructed to transport fracked gas negatively affect all these things.

As faith leaders of the 21st Century we are well aware of the detrimental effects on the atmosphere of our continued use of fossil fuels and we oppose the continued development of a fossil infrastructure that is literally killing our planet. The Union of Concerned Scientists report that burning fossil fuels shows us the visible cost to our ecosystem, but the hidden costs are much higher. Fracked gas is extremely dangerous. Besides being flammable, gas pipelines emit a significant source of methane emissions through leaks large and small, a material 84 times more detrimental to our atmosphere than carbon dioxide. No pipeline is a hundred percent leak proof, no matter the guarantees and insurances that come from the manufacturer.

Furthermore, we wholeheartedly disagree with the process of fracking because of the extreme detrimental effects to the environment where this process occurs. It has been well documented that irreparable damage is caused to drinking water and to the seismic stability of the earth when this technique is put to use. Pipelines transporting fracked gas imperil water that flows near it and away from it every minute of a pipeline's existence. Once the gas is out, the only solution is to wait while this hazardous source wrecks havoc on the wildlife, plant life, and human life it encounters in its flow downstream. Cleanup is virtually impossible.

We resolve that any new investment in energy infrastructure based on the extraction of fossil fuels is morally reprehensible and, as people of faith, we believe it is an abuse of the God-given gift of creation for which we are charged to care.

We believe that by numbers, geographic representation, and social influence, the faith communities of North Carolina have the potential to shift the state's priorities toward a more just and sustainable future. Toward that end, we both circulate this statement of concern and commitment, and also support our words with appropriate behavior. May our actions praise the Creator of the life whom we hereby honor, and may all creation be served by our efforts.